

The Lost Sheep

Sunday School Lesson for Kindergarten to 2nd Grade, 45 minutes

Main point: Every person matters to God, and He is full of joy when one lost person comes back to Him.

Bible passage: Luke 15:1–7. Read it before class.

Memory verse: "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." *Luke 19:10 (KJV)*

You need: a Bible, a paper or toy sheep, 6 index cards, a marker, crayons, and one take-home sheet for each child.

Before class: write the memory verse on the 6 cards (see part 4). Put a bookmark in your Bible at Luke 15.

1. Opening game: Find the Lost Sheep (5–10 minutes)

Send one child out of the room (or have them close their eyes) while you hide the sheep. When the "shepherd" comes back, the class helps by saying "baa" softly when the shepherd is far away and louder as the shepherd gets close. When the sheep is found, everyone cheers! Play a few rounds with new shepherds. Ask: *How did it feel to finally find it?* Say: "Today Jesus tells a story about a man who would not stop looking until he found his one lost sheep."

2. Bible story: The Man Who Kept Looking (10 minutes)

Hold up your Bible open to Luke 15, so the kids can see the story comes from God's Word. Tell it in your own words:

One day many people came close to Jesus to hear Him teach. Some of them were **publicans**. Publicans were tax collectors: they took money from people for the government, and many people did not like them. Others were people everyone called **sinners** (Luke 15:1). Jesus let them all come close.

Some leaders called the **Pharisees** and the **scribes** did not like that at all. They **murmured**, which means they grumbled and complained. They said, "This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them" (15:2). That means, "Jesus welcomes sinners and eats with them!"

So Jesus told them a **parable**. A parable is a story Jesus told to teach a lesson (15:3). Jesus said: think about a man who has **one hundred sheep**. One sheep gets lost. Won't he leave the ninety-nine sheep in the **wilderness**, a wild open place with no houses, and go after the lost one **until he finds it?** (15:4)

Ask the kids: *How many sheep did he have? How many got lost? Which one did he go looking for?*

The story continues: The man looked and looked. And when he found his sheep, he lifted it up and laid it **on his shoulders, rejoicing**. That means he was full of joy (15:5)! He carried the sheep all the way home.

When he got home, he called together his friends and neighbors and said, "**Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost**" (15:6). He wanted everyone to be happy with him.

Then Jesus told what the story means. **Read Luke 15:7 from your Bible:** "I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance." Say: "**Repent** means to be sorry for doing wrong and turn back to God. When even one person turns back to God, there is joy in heaven!"

The grumbling leaders thought Jesus should stay away from sinners. But Jesus showed them that God goes looking for people who are lost, and heaven is glad when even one comes home. Later, Jesus said it plainly: He came "to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10).

3. Questions to ask (5 minutes)

1. Who came close to hear Jesus? (*Publicans and sinners, Luke 15:1*)
2. How many sheep did the man have? (*One hundred, 15:4*)
3. How long did the man keep looking? (*Until he found it, 15:4*)
4. How did he carry the sheep home? (*On his shoulders, rejoicing, 15:5*)
5. What did he say to his friends and neighbors? (*"Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost," 15:6*)

4. Memory verse: Seek and Find (5 minutes)

Write the verse on 6 cards: *For the Son of man / is come / to seek / and to save / that which was lost. / Luke 19:10*. Explain the old words: **Son of man** is a name Jesus called Himself, **is come** means has come, **seek** means look for, and **lost** means far away from God. Read the verse together. Then hide the cards around the room. Kids seek them, put them in order and read the verse together. Hide them again and play once more.

5. What this means for us (5 minutes)

Say: "The man went looking for his lost sheep, and Jesus came looking for us. God loves you very much. But everyone has done wrong things. The Bible calls that sin: 'For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God' (Romans 3:23, KJV). That means none of us is as good as God. Jesus is God who came to earth as a man (1 Timothy 3:16). Jesus died for our sins, He was buried, and He rose again (1 Corinthians 15:3–4)! The Bible tells us how to obey the gospel, the good news about Jesus: 'Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.' (Acts 2:38, KJV) To **repent** means we are sorry for our sin and we turn away from it. We are **baptized**, buried all the way under the water, in Jesus' name, so our sins are washed away (Romans 6:4; Acts 22:16). **Remission** means God takes our sins away. And God fills us with the **Holy Ghost**, His own Spirit, and we speak in other tongues, words God gives us, just like the believers did in the Bible (Acts 2:4)."

Pray with the kids, and encourage them to talk with their parents and pastor about being baptized in Jesus' name and filled with the Holy Ghost. Never pressure a child.

This week: look for someone who is alone or left out, and ask them to play, sit with you or come to church with you.

6. Activity (10–15 minutes)

Choose one: the **Lost Sheep word search** (vbshq.com/puzzles/lost-sheep-word-search), the Lost Sheep coloring page or craft (vbshq.com/bible-stories/lost-sheep), or **Shepherd, Where's Your Sheep?**: one child is the shepherd and closes their eyes. Point to one "sheep," who says "baa" in a funny voice. The shepherd guesses who it is. If the shepherd is right, that sheep becomes the next shepherd.

7. Prayer

"Dear God, thank You that every person matters to You, and that Jesus came to seek and to save the lost. Help us love people the way You do, and help us include kids who are left out. In Jesus' name, amen."

If a child asks, "Am I a lost sheep?": answer simply and gently. The Bible says everyone has sinned (Romans 3:23), so everyone needs Jesus. The good news is that Jesus came looking for us, and heaven is glad when anyone turns to God (Luke 15:7). Encourage them to talk with their parents and pastor.